MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT BUREAU
HELENA, MONTANA

MEMORANDUM

TO: FILES (BN Somers)

FROM: John Arrigo

DATE: March 07, 1984

SUBJECT: Sampling of Somers Water Supply and Waste Pit at Somers Tie Plant.

On February 2, 1984 Rob Greene WQB and I collected samples from the Somers Water Supply and from a waste pit at the BN tie plant. Initially we met with Warren Hersman (phone 857-3563) of the Somers Water Board. Bob Braico, Hydrometers Inc. accompanied us. We briefly discussed the problems associated with the transfer of ownership of the water system from BN to the City of Somers. We then secured the appropriate keys and went to the pump station. Water for the supply is obtained from Flathead Lake approximately 1500 feet from shore at a depth somewhere between 100 and 200 feet below the surface. Water is piped to the pump house where it is chlorinated and pumped to the distribution system.

Initially we wanted to obtain a sample of the water before and after chlorination. Sampling before chlorination was impractical so only one chlorinated sample was obtained at the pump house. We them sampled water from a tap at the BN tie plant office for a comparison sample out of the system.

We next sampled a waste pit located south of the plant near the shore of Flathead Lake. At this time we were joined by Mike Abbot from BN Vancover WA. The pit was an ice covered pond irregularly shaped and approximately 50 feet across. A power ice auger was used to drill holes through the 3-4" thick ice. Small drops of oil were visible on the surface of the ice. There was approximately 1 foot of water in the pit. A post hole digger was used to obtain approximately a 1 foot deep sample of sediment and oily sludge at two locations from the bottom of the pit. Material sampled consisted of gray sandy clay saturated with a black tar-like oil.

We next examined the shore area and dug several shallow holes with a shovel to look for any oily/creosote deposits. Oil saturated sand was sampled from an area directly below the outflow ditch from the pit. The material was primarily silty, five-grained sand with some oil staining. The black tar-like material was not present. A hole was also dug with the auger in the out-flow ditch between the pit and the shore. Soil in the pit was saturated with the black tar.

Samples were delivered to the MSU lab for poly-nuclear aromatic hydrocarbon analysis. Bob Braico Collected duplicate samples for identical analysis.